

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 15, 2008

The Honorable R. David Paulison
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Paulison:

We are writing to request relevant information regarding FEMA's decision to deny a request by Governor Mitch Daniels that a major disaster declaration be declared for the State of Indiana for severe damage sustained to Elkhart, Kosciusko and Marshall Counties as a result of an EF-3 tornado that occurred on the evening of October 18, 2007.

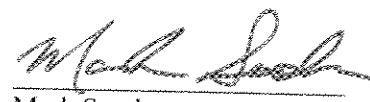
We understand that the joint FEMA/State Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) determined that a significant number of homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed; a significant percentage of damages were uninsured; and that the communities and people faced a significant economic hardship following the event. Disappointingly, despite the PDA and subsequent state and federal assessments, FEMA determined that the damage did not warrant a major disaster declaration and eligibility for Individual Assistance to the residents of the three counties.

As we are sure you would agree, ensuring transparency and understanding of FEMA's decision-making when it comes to a determination that has such a tremendous impact on our constituents and the communities we represent is vitally important. For this reason, we request that FEMA provide us with all PDA reports compiled related to the October 18, 2007 tornado; FEMA staff recommendations related to analyzing and determining whether a major disaster declaration and eligibility for Individual Assistance was warranted; and a detailed explanation by FEMA of how this information was used to determine that the impact of the event was not of the severity and magnitude that warrants a major disaster declaration and eligibility for Individual Assistance for Elkhart, Kosciusko and Marshall Counties.

We would appreciate your accommodation of this request within fourteen days. Should you have any questions or information regarding our request, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,


Joe Donnelly
Member of Congress


Mark Souder
Member of Congress